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Baltimore Pimp Convicted on Federal Charges of Sex Trafficking of a Child and Using the Internet to Promote a Prostitution Business

Baltimore, Maryland – A federal jury convicted Ryan Russell Parks, a/k/a Dinero, age 26, of Baltimore, Maryland, for two counts of sex trafficking of a minor and one count of using the Internet to promote a business enterprise involving prostitution. The verdict was returned late on July 18, 2019, after a four-day trial.

The conviction was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Robert K. Hur; Special Agent in Charge Jennifer C. Boone of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Baltimore Field Office; and Colonel William M. Pallozzi, Superintendent of the Maryland State Police.

“Ryan Parks preyed on vulnerable girls in order to profit by selling them for sex. When an adult profits from sex with a child, that is human trafficking, period,” said Maryland U.S. Attorney Robert K. Hur. “Through the Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force and the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, local, state, and federal law enforcement partners are working with non-profit organizations to help human trafficking victims and prosecute the traffickers. Working to end human trafficking is a priority for the Maryland U.S. Attorney’s Office.”

According to the evidence presented at his trial, Parks trafficked two vulnerable minor victims—a 16-year-old girl (Girl 1) and a 15-year-old girl (Girl 2)—for commercial sex. According to trial testimony, Parks met Girl 1 online. During their communications Parks learned that she was hungry and had no real place to live, and he offered Girl 1 a place to stay. Parks sent a car to pick up Girl 1, and within a day, he caused advertisements to be posted on a website that marketed commercial sex workers. These advertisements contained photographs and descriptions of Girl 1 and offered Girl 1 for commercial sex acts. Parks stayed with Girl 1 in the motel room, along with another woman he was advertising on the Internet for commercial sex. Parks would leave the room for short periods of time, when men would come to the room to have sex with Girl 1, and he would return to the room shortly after the men left the room. Parks paid for additional advertisements on the website offering Girl 1 for commercial sex on August 1, and August 2, 2017. Girl 1 did not get to keep the money that she was paid by the men who came to the room to have sex with her. One of Girl 1’s customers returned to the room the next day to rescue her, and he took her to live in a different city with his sister.

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The evidence also proved that in November 2017, Parks met Girl 2 online, and he learned that she had run away from her foster home. On November 16, 2017, Parks paid a driver through an application on his cell phone to pick up Girl 2 and bring her to his home. Girl 2, who was 15 years old, told Parks that she was 17 years old, in foster care, and was in an unhappy situation. Parks provided Girl 2 with marijuana and had sex with her. He talked to her about making money through prostitution, and he took her to the same motel in Baltimore where Parks had harbored Girl 1. Because she had run away from her foster home without a coat, a purse, or change of clothing, Parks purchased a bra, panties, and condoms for Girl 2. Parks took photographs of Girl 2 and paid for an online advertisement offering Girl 2 for commercial sex using his cell phone. Several of the photos that Parks uploaded to the website were rejected, because they contained nudity and were too explicit. Less revealing photos of Girl 2, wearing the bra and panties purchased by Parks, were accepted and uploaded to the online advertisement. As he had with Girl 1, Parks then set the prices and time limits for the sex acts to be performed on Girl 2, and he instructed her on the process of checking a man for a wire when he came into the motel room. Parks stayed in the motel room with Girl 2 when other men were not present, but he left the room and stood outside in a stairwell when men arrived to have sex with Girl 2. Parks offered Girl 2 for commercial sex from November 16 through November 20, 2017. During this time, over 300 individuals contacted the phone number placed by Parks on the advertisement, to inquire about commercial sex with Girl 2. On November 21, 2017, Girl 2 contacted her foster care social worker, who dispatched police to the motel. According to trial testimony, Parks reviewed Girl 2's phone while she was in the shower and saw that she had contacted her social worker. Parks became angry, told her to delete information from her phone and to remove the chip from her phone, and then he left the motel. Girl 2 went to the lobby and turned herself in to police.

While law enforcement was investigating the trafficking of the two minor victims, they discovered evidence regarding the extent of Parks' prostitution business. Evidence at trial proved that from February 25, 2017, through the date that he was arrested on January 10, 2018, Parks paid over \$1,000 for approximately 295 commercial sex advertisements placed on the Internet. Parks advertised approximately 27 different women and girls for commercial sex. Parks also paid over \$6,000 for hotel rooms in Baltimore County and Baltimore City, during the course of his prostitution enterprise.

As a result of his conviction, Parks will be required to register as a sex offender in the places where he resides, where he is an employee, and where he is a student, under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA).

Parks faces a minimum mandatory sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum of life in prison for each of the two counts of sex trafficking a minor; and a maximum of five years in prison for using the Internet to promote a business enterprise involving prostitution. U.S. District Judge Thomas E. Johnston has not yet scheduled a date for sentencing. Parks remains detained.

The case was investigated by the FBI-led Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force (MCETF), created in 2010 to combat child prostitution, with members from 10 state and federal law enforcement agencies. The Task Force coordinates with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Maryland State Police Child Recovery Unit to identify missing children being advertised online for prostitution.

MCETF partners with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, formed in 2007 to discover and rescue victims of human trafficking while identifying and prosecuting offenders. Members include federal,

state and local law enforcement, as well as victim service providers and local community members. For more information about the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, please visit http://www.justice.gov/usao/md/priorities_human.html.

United States Attorney Robert K. Hur commended the FBI and Maryland State Police for their work in the investigation. Mr. Hur thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christine Duey and Matthew Maddox, who are prosecuting the case.

Topic(s):
Human Trafficking
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